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ABSTRACT

This Child Development Associate (CDA) training module provides guidelines for program evlauation by the CDA intern. Program evaluation objectives and activities for the intern are outlined. Instructional material in the module emphasizes (1) types of and occasions for program evaluation activities, (2) components of a comprehensive child care center program, (3) the formulation of goals from program objectives, (4) the use of goals in program evaluation of children, parents, staff and community-center relationships, and (5) the use of evaluation data in changing the center program. Resources for further study are listed. Guides are given for writing and evaluating program objectives. (Author/RH)

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Competency Based Training Module #34

PARTICIPATING IN PROGRAM EVALUATION

by

Dr. Ann Eddowes

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TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

NOTE TO THE INTERN:

This CDA training module has been prepared as a guide for you and your CDA Advisor to help you to develop certain practical skills necessary for your work in an early childhood center. Although it contains many useful ideas, it is not intended to be a self-study program. Many decisions about your training experiences are left up to you and your CDA Advisor. The activities given in this module are "suggested" activities, and should be used if they are appropriate to your learning needs. You or your Advisor may come up with other activities more appropriate for your particular situation, children, or background of experience and training.

Your Advisor will evaluate your performance in each of the objectives. S/he may do so right away on the basis of skills you already have, or s/he may evaluate you after you have done some learning activities, or both. If you think you already have the skills required by some of the objectives, you should ask to be evaluated right away. You may not have to do any activities for some of the objectives. You do, however, have to demonstrate the required skills for your advisor; you cannot just tell s/him that you have the skills. If your advisor has already observed some of the skills before you entered this module, s/he may check you off on those skills without further observation.

When your Advisor has evaluated your performance in an objective area as satisfactory, s/he will initial and date that objective as completed in your copy of this module. When all of the objectives have been initialled, you have completed the requirements of this module and have earned credit. Keep this module as your permanent record of completion, and as a reference to use in your classroom.

As you can see, how fast you are able to complete this module depends on a lot of things: how much time and effort you can put into it; how much help your Advisor can give you; how much experience and training you have already had.

The Arizona HSST/CDA program hopes that you find your participation in CDA a valuable and practical training experience. We would appreciate any suggestions you may have for improvements in the training program and in this module.

PARTICIPATING IN PROGRAM EVALUATION

CDA TRAINING MODULE #34

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This module relates to the following CDA Competencies:*

G. CARRY OUT OTHER RESPONSIBILITIES RELATED TO THE CHILDREN'S PROGRAM. (see items 1 through 4)

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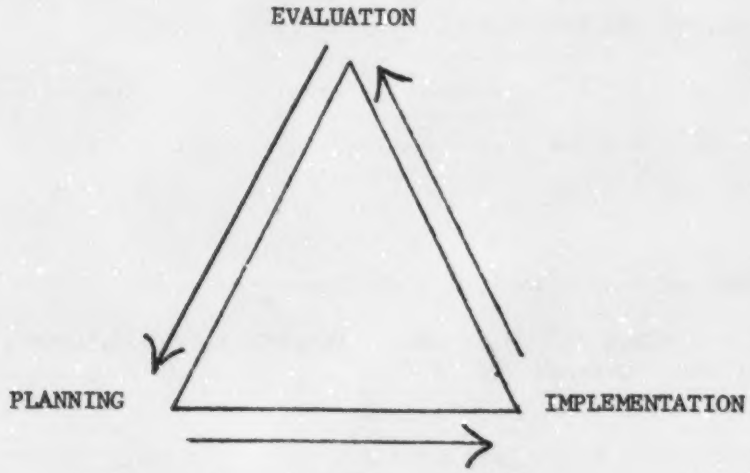
*For reference, see the Arizona HSST/CDA "CDA Assessment"

PARTICIPATING IN PROGRAM EVALUATION

INTRODUCTION

Evaluation plays a crucial role in the successful operation of a child care center. It is both a beginning and an ending in the planning and implementation of the total early childhood program.



Evaluation is the process of judging a program objectively. It is necessary in identifying, assessing, maintaining, and sometimes revising priorities. Evaluation encourages positive growth among staff members involved in the planing and implementation of all of the program phases.

Informal evaluation can and should be done continously by all levels of staff and by parents involved in a child care center. Formal plans for evaluation at both center and program levels can also be helpful in judging the effectiveness of the program design; developing, improving and/or expanding the program; and developing and revising policies.

The purpose of this module is to offer guidelines to assist the CDA Intern in developing skills to use in the successful evaluation of the center program.

OBJECTIVES, ACTIVITIES, ASSESSMENT

CDA Intern's Name _____

Date of Entry_____ Date of Completion_____

OBJECTIVES	SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES
1. The Intern participates in evaluation processes at both the center and program levels. ASSESSMENT _____ date/initial	1. Read Section I of the Study Guide. a. Discuss with your advisor the importance of evaluation in an early childhood program. b. Discuss with other staff members the methods of both informal and formal evaluation that are used in the center.
2. The Intern understands the program objectives for each component area. ASSESSMENT _____ date/initial	2. Read Section II of the Study Guide. a. Compare the center objectives with those listed in the Study Guide. b. Discuss the program objectives with your advisor. c. Develop an example of a program activity for each of the center objectives.
3. The Intern evaluates the program with respect to the goals established for children. ASSESSMENT _____ date/initial	3. Read Section III of the Study Guide. a. Develop specific goals or objectives concerning the program for children. b. List some examples of informal evaluation of children in the program. c. Make a formal check-list of items based on specific goals concerning the children in the program, and use it in evaluation.
4. The Intern evaluates the program with respect to the goals for parents. ASSESSMENT _____ date/initial	4. Read Section IV of the Study Guide. a. Develop specific goals or objectives concerning the program for parents. b. List some examples of informal evaluation of parents in the program. c. Make a formal check-list of items based on specific goals concerning the parents in the program for use in evaluation. d. Use your check-list to evaluate the parent participation in your program.

OBJECTIVES	SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES
5. The Intern evaluates the program with respect to the goals for the staff. ASSESSMENT _____ date/initial	5. Read Section V of the Study Guide. a. Develop specific goals or objectives concerning the program for staff. b. List some examples of informal evaluation of staff in the program. c. Make a formal check-list of items based on specific goals concerning the children in the program for use in evaluation. d. Use your check-list to evaluate staff participation.
6. The Intern evaluates the program with respect to the goals related to the community. ASSESSMENT _____ date/initial	6. Read Section VI of the Study Guide. a. Develop specific goals or objectives concerning the program for community interaction. b. List some examples of informal evaluation of community interaction in the program. c. Make a formal check-list of items based on specific goals concerning community interaction related to the program for use in evaluation. d. Use your check-list to evaluate the relationship between your program and the community.
7. The Intern uses information gained from evaluation to make needed changes in the program. ASSESSMENT _____ date/initial	7. Read Section VII of the Study Guide. a. List examples of changes that were made after informal evaluation. b. Participate in a team planning process to make changes indicated by the formal evaluation outcomes. List such changes implemented in your program.
8. The Intern will make an implementation plan, stating how the skills and information gained through completing this module will be incorporated into s/his ongoing teaching. ASSESSMENT _____ date/initial	8. Review with your Advisor the new skills you have gained in program evaluation activities. Make an implementation plan, answering these questions: a. What skills will you use in your regular teaching? b. What schedule will you use, incorporating these skills (how often will you use the new activities and skills)?

OBJECTIVES

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

C. When do you want to review your implementation progress with your advisor?

Insert your implementation plan into your CDA Portifolio and refer to it periodically to check your own progress.

PARTICIPATING IN PROGRAM EVALUATION

STUDY GUIDE

I. Evaluation of one form or another can take place daily in the child care center. Sometimes this evaluation is informal and sometimes it is more formal in nature.

A. What is program evaluation? It is the process of objectively judging the value of some aspect or phase of the total program. Evaluation can be a base from which to plan and implement a program. It can also be used to judge the value of the program after it is in operation.

B. Informal Evaluation: Observations are made each day of the program, center environment, the children, the parents, other staff members, and interactions with the community. Some examples of informal evaluations follow:

1. Program/Children: The new cars in the block center have increased that areas's popularity. The area may need to be enlarged temporarily to accomodate a few more children at a time.

2. Program/Parents: The new girl's mother doesn't know anyone. It would be helpful to introduce her to some of the other parents.

3. Program/Staff Members: The assistant teacher did a really good job with the story today. It should be mentioned to him.

4. Program/Community: The Community Resource Program is very effective. We should continue to enlarge our list of persons who can share experiences with the children.

Each teacher should keep a journal, or have some other place, to write down such informal observations.

C. Formal Evaluation: Sometimes more structure is necessary in order to provide a systematic evaluation of the child care center's goals and purposes. The goals and purposes are those concerning the children, the parents, other staff members, and interactions with the community. Check-lists that are completed at regular intervals can be helpful in providing on-going information. An example of a check-list item in each of the areas follows:

1. Program/Children:

	Superior				Needs Improvement	Comments
Interest areas are clearly defined and partially enclosed, so that children know where to use the materials.	5	4	3	2	1	
			Acceptable			

2. Program/Parents:

	Superior				Needs Improvement	Comments
The teacher shows that serving parents is one of the primary program responsibilities.	5	4	3	2	1	
			Acceptable			

3. Program/Staff Members

	Superior				Needs Improvement	Comments
Ideas are shared both formally and informally between staff members.	5	4	3	2	1	
			Acceptable			

4. Program/Community

	Superior				Needs Improvement	Comments
There is evidence in the classroom that community resources are being used in the program.	5	4	3	2	1	
			Acceptable			

II. Major component areas that have been found to be important in a comprehensive child care center program include education, health, nutrition, social services, and parent involvement (See Reference #5). Objectives similar to those listed below should be available for each component.

A. Education: The objectives of the education component of a child care center are as follows:

1. Provide children with a learning environment and the varied experiences which will help them develop socially, intellectually, physically, and emotionally in a manner appropriate to their age and stage of development toward the overall goal of social competence.

2. Integrate the educational aspects of the various child care center components in the daily program of activities.

3. Involve parents in educational activities of the program to enhance their role as the principal influence on the child's education and development.

4. Assist parents to increase knowledge, understanding, skills and experience in child growth and development.

5. Identify and reinforce experiences which occur in the home that parents can utilize as educational activities for their children.

B. Health: The objectives of the health component of a child care center are as follows:

1. Provide a comprehensive health services program which includes a broad range of medical, dental, mental health and nutrition services to preschool children, including handicapped children, to assist the child's physical, emotional, cognitive and social development toward the overall goal of social competence.

2. Promote preventive health services and early intervention.

3. Provide the child's family with the necessary skills and insight and otherwise attempt to link the family to an ongoing health care system to ensure that the child continues to receive comprehensive health care even after leaving the child care center.

C. Nutrition: The objectives of the nutrition component of a child care center are as follows:

1. Provide food which will help meet the child's daily nutritional needs in a clean and pleasant environment, recognizing individual differences and cultural patterns, and thereby promote sound physical, social, and emotional growth and development.

2. Provide an environment for nutritional services which will support and promote the use of the feeding situation as an opportunity for learning.

3. Help staff, child and family to understand the relationship of nutrition to health, factors which influence food practices, variety of ways to provide for nutritional needs and to apply this knowledge in the development of sound food habits even after leaving the child care center.

4. Demonstrate the interrelationships of nutrition to other activities of the child care center program and its contribution to the overall child development goals.

5. Involve all staff, parents and other community agencies as appropriate in meeting the child's nutritional needs so that nutritional care provided by the child care center complements and supplements that of home and community.

D. Social Services: The objectives of the social services component of a child care center are as follows:

1. Establish and maintain an outreach and recruitment process which systematically insures enrollment of eligible children.

2. Provide enrollment of eligible children regardless of race, sex, creed, color, national origin, or handicapping condition.

3. Achieve parent participation in the center and home program and related activities.

4. Assist the family in its own efforts to improve the condition and quality of family life.

5. Make parents aware of community services and resources and facilitate their use.

E. Parent Involvement: The objectives of the parent involvement component of a child care center are as follows:

1. Provide a planned program of experiences and activities which support and enhance the parental role as the principal influence in their child's education and development.

2. Provide a program that recognizes the parents as:

a. Responsible guardians of their children's well being.

b. Prime educators of their children.

c. Contributors to the child care center and to their communities.

3. Provide the following kinds of opportunities for parent participation:

a. Direct involvement in decision making in the program planning and operations.

b. Participation in classroom and other program activities as volunteers and observers.

c. Activities for parents which they have helped to develop.

d. Working with their own children in cooperation with child care center and staff.

III. There is a relationship between the objectives that are available for each component in the child care center and the goals established specifically for the children in the program. Specific goals concerning children can be developed from the program objectives for each component. These specific program goals related to children can be useful in evaluation. Evaluation of the center program with respect to the goals established for children can take place both informally and formally. (See Supplement for further information concerning the development of objectives.)

A. Informal evaluation is carried out through observations of the children in relation to specific program goals.

B. Formal evaluation is carried out through a systematic comparison of specific program goals concerning children with the actual practice taking place in the child care center.

IV. There is a relationship between the objectives that are available for each component in the child care center and the goals established specifically for the parents in the program. Specific goals concerning parents can be developed from the program objectives for each component. These specific program goals related to parents can be useful in evaluation. Evaluation of the center program with respect to the goals established for parents can take place both informally and formally.

A. Informal evaluation is carried out through observations of the parents in relation to specific program goals.

B. Formal evaluation is carried out through a systematic comparison of specific program goals concerning parents with the actual practice taking place in the child care center.

V. There is a relationship between the objectives that are available for each component in the child care center and the goals established specifically for the staff in the program. Specific goals concerning staff can be developed from the program objectives for each component. These specific program goals related to staff can be useful in evaluation. Evaluation of the center program with respect to the goals established for staff can take place both informally and formally.

A. Informal evaluation is carried out through observations of the staff in relation to specific program goals.

B. Formal evaluation is carried out through a systematic comparison of specific program goals concerning staff with the actual practice taking place in the child care center.

VI. There is a relationship between the objectives that are available for each component in the child care center and the goals established specifically for community interaction in the program. Specific goals concerning community interaction can be developed from the program objectives from each component. These specific program goals related to community interaction can be useful in evaluation. Evaluation of the center program with respcet to the goals established for community interaction can take place both informally and formally.

A. Informal evaluation is carried out through observations of the community interaction in relation to specific program goals.

B. Formal evaluation is carried out through a systematic comparison of specific program goals concerning community interaction with the actual practice taking place in the child care center.

VII. Both informal and formal evaluation can be helpful in providing information on which to base needed changes in the program of a child care center. After changes are made, evaluation can again be a useful tool with which to judge the effectiveness of the changes. It is both a beginning and an ending in program implementation.

RESOURCES FOR FURTHER STUDY

1. Evans, Ellis D. CONTEMPORARY INFLUENCES IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION (2nd ed.). New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1975.

2. Hildebrand, Verna. INTRODUCTION TO EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION. New York: The Macmillan Co., 1971.

3. Morrison, George S. EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION TODAY. Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill, 1976.

4. Popham, W. James. EDUCATIONAL EVALUATION. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1975.

5. U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Office of Human Development, Office of Child Development. HEADSTART PROGRAM PERFORMANCE STANDARDS. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1975.

6. Weinberg, Richard A. and Moore, Shirley G. (Eds.). EVALUATION OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS FOR YOUNG CHILDREN: THE MINNESOTA ROUND TABLE ON EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION II. Washington, D.C.: The Child Development Associate Consortium, 1975.

The program objectives listed in Section II of the Study Guide have been developed for each component area of the comprehensive child care center program. These program objectives must be revised if they are to be useful in the evaluation of the functional aspects of the program concerning children, parents, staff and community. The revision should include specific operations and knowledge necessary in terms of behavioral end-products for each of the program groups to be evaluated.

How can these new objectives be developed: There are several things to remember when writing objectives:

1. The objectives must be specific.
2. The objectives must be clearly stated.
3. The objectives must specify certain behaviors that can be observed.

Examples of objectives for each of the program groups to be evaluated follow:

Program/Children:

1. Activities are appropriate to the skill and age level of the children.
2. Wall displays and bulletin boards include the children's work.
3. Children serve themselves when eating meals or snacks.

Program/Parents:

1. Parents participate in the classroom daily.
2. Parents are encouraged to share ideas useful in the educational program.
3. Parents are given information concerning community resources.

Program/Staff:

1. Teachers and other staff members meet regularly to plan and evaluate the program.
2. Staff members engage in activities related to professional development.
3. There is open communication between staff members.

Program/Community:

1. There is information concerning the center program available to members of the community.
2. Information concerning community resources is available to center personnel.
3. Resources in the community are used for field trips for the children.

Objectives such as those above can be used in the form of a check-list in the formal evaluation of a child care center program.